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**Transportation Committee Public Hearing Testimony**  
**February 28, 2011**

**H.B. No. 6208 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ISSUANCE OF OPERATOR'S LICENSES TO PERSONS WHO WEAR SPECTACLES WITH BIOPTIC LENSES.**

Bioptic Driving is operating a vehicle with the assistance of specialized telescopic/biopic eyewear. This device allows some drivers with low vision meet the minimum standards for licensing. In the 1970s and 1980s, biopic driving became a viable option to aid a group of mildly visually impaired individuals continue as licensed drivers. California issued biopic driver's licenses in 1971 and New York adopted their law in 1977. As of today more than 30 states allow some form of biopic driving in the United States.

The State of CT need not be revolutionary in regards to Biotics; it only needs to look to the State of Indiana which has served as a model for other states and countries. It has a number of checks and balances so that any problems which might reduce the driving safety of the individuals caught before licensure. Training is a very important part of their program. The thirty hours of training makes sure that the patient is trained under different driving conditions. According to Drs. Laura K. Windsor and Richard L. Windsor in their article "Biopic Driving: Driving with Low Vision" they discuss the Basic Optical Principals in Using Biopic for Driving:

- Principle One: 95% of Driving is Through the Carrier Lens since the biopic system reduces the field of view, the biopic system reduces the field of view, and the biopic telescope is used only as a supplement to help with detail vision. Biopic driver's view through their normal distance lenses for most driving activities, but scan intermittently into the telescope to spot distant objects. This is much like the way a driver glances into the rear view mirror for a few seconds.
- Principle Two: Objects appear larger and closer. Biopic telescopes enlarge the image of distance objects, thus improving the ability of the driver to see distance detail. Initially objects may appear closer through the biopic.

- Principle three: Multiplexing while glancing into the telescope, the patient can still see to the side. It takes practice to view an image through the bioptic while still maintaining a visual awareness of the peripheral vision to the side. Just as when we look into the review mirror, we are still aware of motion and movement around us.
- Principle Four: Movement is also magnified as objects are enlarged through the bioptic, they also will seem to move faster. Objects may seem to be “jumpy” through the bioptic. The patient must practice learning to use the system in a smooth and coordinated manner.

In conclusion, legislation to allow drivers to use bioptics is in place in over 30 states in the nation. The process differs in each state but as stated before, the State of Indiana serves as an excellent model for CT to build from. New research and technology will continue to improve the use of bioptics to ensure that our drivers will be safe drivers.

Testimony Submitted by,  
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